

experience and win the hearts and minds of tourists, visitors, and guests for a lifetime.

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

**Opening Reception in the Trade Show/Silent Auction
Sponsored by Alabama Living (Cash Bar)
Singing River**

**Alabama Distillers Guild Spirits Tasting
Shoals Prefunction**

6:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Cocktails/Cash Bar Shoals Atrium

7:00 PM

**Alabama Tourism Department Awards Banquet
Masters of Ceremonies, Lee Sentell, Director, Alabama
Tourism Department and Judy Hood, Muscle Shoals
Sound Studio**

Shoals ABC

9:15 PM

**Dessert and Coffee in the Trade Show
Sponsored by 2027 Hotel Host – The Grand Hotel Golf
Resort & Spa; and City Host – Eastern Shore Chamber
of Commerce Singing River**

Tuesday, July 14

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Registration Registration Desk

**Beverages Shoals Atrium
Sponsored by Florence Coca-Cola Bottling Company
and Royal Cup Coffee and Tea**

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

**Breakfast in the Trade Show and Silent Auction
Sponsored by Singing River**

9:15 AM

General Session Shoals ABC

9:15 AM – 9:20 AM

Marvelous Mark Teaser

9:20 AM – 10:05 AM

***Building the Tourism Workforce of Tomorrow*
Speaker: Dr. Vic Wilson**

10:10 AM – 10:55 AM

***From Stadium Seats to City Streets: The Sports Tourism
Surge*
Speaker: John David, President & CEO
Sports Events & Tourism Association**

11:00 AM

Announcement of Tourism Breakout Session

11:10 AM – 12:00 PM

Breakout Sessions

I – *The Power of Influence: Advocacy is Leadership*

**Panelists: Kim Adams, Attorney at Law, and
Governmental Advisor to ATP; and Tami Reist,
President & CEO, Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist
Assn. Shoals D**

II – *Beyond the Map: Shaping Destinations That Inspire*

**Moderator: Kim Lawson, Renaissance Shoals Resort &
Spa**

**Panelists: Brian Murphy, Director, Florence Arts &
Museums; Sue Pilkilton, Executive Director, Ivy Green,
Birthplace of Helen Keller, and Nancy Pinion, Director,
Jesse Owens Museum Florence**

III – *Trails, Rivers & Parks: Nature-Based Tourism*

**Panelists: Chris Blankenship, Commissioner, Alabama
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and
Matthew Capps, Director, Alabama State Parks**

Muscle Shoals

**IV – *Alabama Tourism Department: Updates,
Opportunities & How to Get Involved***

Shoals E

Moderator: Grey Brennan, Deputy Director

Timekeeper: Jade Cox, Assistant to the Deputy Director

Topics and Speakers:

**PR and Sales - Mary Ella Cauthen and Brooklyn Lundy
Sales/Trade Shows/International -Laura Hicks, Andy
Facer and Janin Nachtweh**

Website and Research - Pam Smith

**Welcome Centers: Trisa Collier and Welcome Center
Managers**

Brand USA – Dani Campana and Angie Austin

**Join members of the ATD for an informative and
interactive breakout session. Hear directly from the
team about the latest developments across their
divisions, exciting new initiatives, and what's on the
horizon for promoting Alabama as a premier travel
destination.**

**Discover practical ways you can get involved — whether
you're a destination marketer, attraction operator,**

hotelier, or industry partner — including how to align your efforts with statewide tourism goals.

This is your chance to ask questions, share ideas, and leave with clear action steps to maximize your partnership with Alabama Tourism in the months ahead.

12:15 PM – 1:45 PM

Scholarship Luncheon

Shoals ABC

Sponsored by: Alabama Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (AADMO) and Compass Media

Master of Ceremonies, Kelsey Rush, President AADMO, and Dustin Gontarski, President, Compass Media

Presentation of 2026 Tourism Industry Scholarships and the John Wild Memorial Endowed Scholarship by 2026 Chairwomen of the Scholarship Committee, Christy Baranovics and Pam Swanner

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM

Breakout Sessions

V – Predicting Adventure: AI Knows Where to Go Next

Speaker: Randa Hovater, Founder, Tripp & Co. LLC

Shoals D

VI – Funding Your Future – Navigating Tourism Grants

Speaker: Bethany Oliver, Founder, B Hive Consulting

Florence

VII – Destination Marketing Research

Speaker: Greg Fuson, Director of Research, Destination Marketing Research

Muscle Shoals

VIII – Alabama Tourism Department: Updates, Opportunities & How to Get Involved

Shoals E

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3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

General Session

Shoals ABC

Panel Discussions

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM

Topic: *Behind the Hits: How Music Tourism Drives Economic Growth*

Moderator: Ryan Murphy, President and General Manager, Huntsville Venue Group/The Orion Amphitheater

Panelists: Judy Hood, Chairwoman, Muscle Shoals Music Foundation Board

Rodney Hall, President, FAME Studios

John Paul White, UNA Instructor and Grammy Winning Recording Artist

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM

Topic: *Placemaking – How Local Style Shapes the Tourist Experience*

Moderator: Kimberly DeLape, Director, Children's Museum of the Shoals and theStudio Magazine

Panelists: Olivia Terenzio, Director of Programs, Project Threadways

Billy Reid, Founder/Owner/Fashion Designer, *Billy Reid*

Robert Rausch, Artist/Photographer and Professor of Art at UNA

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Update from Senator Katie Britt's Office by State Director, Dana Hall McCain

Shoals ABC

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Reception in the Trade Show/Silent Auction (Cash Bar)

and Final Bidding for the Silent Auction
Sponsored by OWA Parks & Resort **Singing River**

Alabama Distillers Guild Spirits Tasting

7:00 PM

Buses Depart for the Street Party on Historic Mobile Plaza
Sponsored by Visit The Shoals, Renaissance Shoals Resort & Spa, and Florence Downtown Alliance
The Shoals is known for our musical heritage and we're STILL making hits here! We'll showcase our local talent with a special **Street Party** on historic Mobile Plaza in downtown Florence. With food stations and specialty bars throughout, guests can wander into the local shops, Graffiti Alley, adjacent park and free arcade.

Wednesday, July 15

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

Breakfast in the Trade Show **Singing River**
Sponsored by Wind Creek Hospitality

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Refreshments **Shoals Atrium**
Sponsored by Florence Coca-Cola Bottling Company and Royal Cup Coffee and Tea

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Conference Finale: **Shoals ABC**
Fostering Team Alignment to Achieve Big, Unreasonable Dreams
Speaker: Marvelless Mark
Mark is a keynote speaker, experience creator, and expert in human-centered leadership, culture, and performance. Known for transforming traditional meetings into high-energy interactive experiences, Mark blends music, storytelling, humor, and audience participation to create memorable moments that inspire teams to connect, engage, and perform at a higher level

11:00 AM

Silent Auction Payment at Convention Registration Desk

Revised 06/03/2026